GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:882
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2016
Environmental Clearance for Mining
Scindia Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a)whether the Government has recently notified a policy of granting environmental clearances for minor minerals including sand and has come out with guidelines to monitor present mining activities;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether Global Positioning System (GPS) and bar coding system have been enforced to track vehicles of illegal miners and those who indulge in exploiting natural resources beyond permissible limits; and
(d) if so, the extent to which such guidelines are being adhered to by the State Governments?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) and (b): The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time, under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 which deals with the process to grant Environmental Clearance. Further, the Ministry has notified the amendments in the EIA Notification, 2006, vide SO No. 141 (E) on 15.01.2016for minor minerals with special focus on sustainable sand mining. The Ministry, vide notification dated 15.01.2016, for the first time, has delegated the Authority of Environmental Clearance up to 5 hectare of individual mining lease of minor minerals and 25 hectares in clusters to the District Environment Impact Assessment Authority (DEIAA) headed by the District Magistrate/ District Collector. A District Expert Appraisal Committee (DEAC) has also been constituted under the chairmanship of the Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department to assist the DEIAA. The Ministry has also notified the constitution of DEIAA and DEAC, vide Notification SO No. 190 (E) dated 20.01.2016.

(c) and (d):The notification, inter-alia, emphasises the procedure for monitoring of sand /river bed mining w.r.t.the monitoring of the mined out material which is key to the successful implementation of sustainable Environment Management Plan. So use of IT and IT enabled services for effective monitoring along with process reengineering has been made a part of the notification. The gist of monitoring mechanism, inter-alia, are (i) The movement of sand is controlled through Transit Permit. The security feature of Transit Permit should be as Printed on IBA approved MICR paper; Unique Barcode; Unique QR code; Fugitive Ink Background; Invisible Ink Mark; Void Pantograph and Watermark; (ii) Use of IT and IT enabled services for effective monitoring of the quantity of mined out material and transportation along with process reengineering has been made a part of the Notification; (iii) Stringent Monitoring of movement of mined out material from source to destination using Information Technology tools: bar coding, SMS etc. Till date there is no authentic data on how much sand is being mined, this system will generate real time data on mined out sand; and (iv) The route of vehicle from source to destination shall be tracked through the system using check points, Radio-frequency identification (RFID) Tags, and Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking.

The monitoring of mined out mineral, environmental clearance conditions and enforcement of Environment Management Plan is ensured by the DEIAA, SEIAA and the State Pollution Control Board or Committee. The status of compliance of stipulated conditions of the environmental clearances of different projects, including sand mining projects, is monitored by ten Regional Offices of this Ministry in the Country.The Ministry has also requested all the Chief Ministers to implement the Notification in true spirit in order to make environmentally sustainable sand mining in the Country.
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